

The Lioness

A Monthly Journal from Annandale United FC

<http://www.annandaleunitedfc.com/>

ISSUE #1 - JANUARY 2017



Photo: AUFC U13G Extreme at North American Super-Y Finals in Bradenton Florida, December 2016

WELCOME 2017—A YEAR OF GROWTH!!

Welcome players, parents, coaches and staff to the first inaugural volume of **The Lioness**! This is a monthly newsletter dedicated to the needs of all Annandale United FC (AUFC) Girls, from recreational to elite, in an effort to improve communication about club initiatives, educate our players, and most importantly, create a culture of ONE!

2017 is poised to be an exciting year of growth for AUFC! As the newly appointed Director of Coaching for the Girls program, I am particularly eager to reach out to every family and share the Club's vision and plans for the future.

In this issue we introduce the Player Development Model (PDM) which has been adapted from the US Youth Soccer (USYS) age guidelines to the specific needs of our Club. The role of our coaching staff is to inspire our players to develop the physical, technical, tactical and social skills necessary to achieve success. Our PDM will be the scaffolding that guides the development of our players, each at their own level.

Recognizing that all players must develop in an environment that fosters individual growth, we are excited to introduce our **player pathway**. Our pathway ensures that regardless of a player's current ability, she is afforded

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AUFC's Mission

- ◆ Serve the expanded needs of players in Northern Virginia who enjoy playing competitive soccer and want to advance their skills to the next level.
- ◆ Develop the player in an age appropriate, experiential manner and provide pathway opportunities to the highest level of the game.
- ◆ Expand the club and deliver an experience that reinforces our proud history of excellence and championship play!

THE LIONESS

The lionesses are the hunters for their pride and execute their skills with precision and complex teamwork. Each lioness develops specific skills for her role in the hunting pride and, generally, assumes that role during most hunts. Lionesses hunt instinctively in a cooperative fashion.

Our players are Lionesses..

opportunities to compete at a level that makes the best sense for her, including specialized programs such as the summer Super-Y or the elite Eastern Regional League (ERL). AUFC will utilize our ODSL, NCSL & NPL league affiliations to create multiple teams. For example our U9/10s will play in the NCSL this Spring to ensure age appropriate development in a competitive environment. Additionally, our US Club Soccer partnership with FC Virginia (FCV) will ensure mobility options for higher competition so all player needs are met.

The popular Wednesday night Annandale Professional Skills Academy (APSA) will also get a facelift this Spring season. While still bringing together multiple age groups to train with different coaches, the APSA will introduce a player needs based approach. Coaches will now be tasked with evaluating their players weekly and place them in two specific 30-minute blocks of instruction to ensure the time spent training addresses the needs of each player. Training blocks may include SAQ (*Speed, Agility, and Quickness*), Ball Control, Passing, Dribbling/Foot-skills, Defending, Finishing/Crossing or Goal to name a few. Additionally to provide growth opportunities for all Club members, recreational players will also be invited to train at the APSA. All APSA sessions will culminate in a 30 minute scrimmage that encourages players to experiment and express themselves.

AUFC recognizes that coaching instruction is the key factor in successful player development. As all academic teachers must be qualified to deliver approved academic curriculum, AUFC is excited to introduce a coaching development standard to ensure consistent, high quality delivery of age appropriate skills. All AUFC coaches will be required to hold at least a USSF E license, with the goal of ensuring complete coaching certification, at the appropriate level dictated by the age group they lead, by Jan 2018. Additionally, under the guidance of the Club's Technical Director and Directors of Coaching, we are establishing a repository of approved, functional training sessions that coaches will be capable of leveraging to ensure critical coaching objectives are delivered in a successful manner.

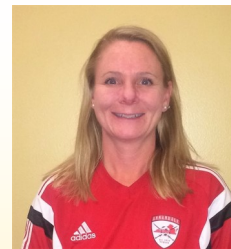
In this issue I am also pleased to introduce, Dr. Darren McKnight, our new AUFC Girls Cognitive Development Advisor. Dr. McKnight, the author of "*Soccer is A Thinking Game!*" will help our Club develop the often overlooked aspect of Psycho-Social behavior. What are cognitive skills needed to succeed on the field? Simply put, this form of development refers to one's abilities to gain meaning and knowledge from experience and information. Soccer, ultimately is a series of decisions and problems that every player is challenged to solve in seconds under match conditions.

I want to personally re-assure every player and parent that our AUFC professional staff is prepared and motivated to **take our program to the next level!** United as One, recreational to elite, we can ensure our Club continues the tradition of excellence and the development of champions! Stay tuned for more enhancements, staff additions and program updates coming in the next few weeks. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions, concerns or feedback on how we can improve!

Scott Norberg
Girls Director of Coaching
scott_norberg@annandaleunitedfc.org



Coach's Spotlight



Coach Karen Billingslea

Coach Karen was recruited to play NCAA Division I at Dartmouth College where she assisted the team in earning their first top 20 national ranking, with winning an Ivy League Championship, and by captaining the team to their first ECAC tournament bid in 1992. Karen coached in Great Falls, and Reston from 2009 through 2012 working with the U8, U10 and U11 age groups. In July of 2012, Karen earned her US Soccer E level coaching license and is currently in the process of earning her US Soccer D license as well as NSCAA diplomas.



Coach Nicholas Collantes

Coach Nick played eight years of Division 1-2 NCSL for Herndon Youth Soccer and SYA, four years of high school soccer at Chantilly High School, and club/intramural at Old Dominion University. After college, Coach Nick worked for Soccer Performance International (SPI) a training company employed by CYA and ODFC. While working as a trainer for SPI, he coached boys and girls from U5-U18, and also coached at the high school level as the JV boys' soccer coach at John Champe High School for two years. Coach Nick is completing his second year on AUFC staff this spring.



Player Development Model (PDM)

Rooted in the Annandale Boys & Girls Club (ABGC), our program has a proud and long history of developing some of the best players and championship teams in Northern Virginia since 1960. To continue this tradition, it is critical we recognize that the demands of the modern game have evolved since the last century. The evolution has led to the implementation of a Player Development Model (PDM) which has been adapted from current US Youth Soccer (USYS) guidelines. First paragraph third sentence... Focused on player skill development in the areas of technical, physical, tactical, and social, the PDM also recognizes the important role that the coach and the club play in contributing to the holistic development of our youth players. Coaching standards are incorporated into this model and will be emphasized at AUFC.

No longer thought of as a niche sport in the United States, Soccer is now increasingly becoming a major force in youth sports. With "over 13 million American youths playing soccer in the United States, soccer is the third most played team sport in the U.S., behind only basketball and baseball/softball. Since 1974 with just more than 100,000 registered players in the USYS system, our beloved game is growing in ways that were not imagined nor

expected thirty years ago. With this shift in momentum however, comes the responsibility to ensure that all of our players from U6 to U19 are afforded the opportunity to develop within the game in an age specific manner.

Just like any academic curriculum, our "student" players must be challenged, pushed and ultimately successful in transitioning or "graduating" to the next level of play. Age appropriate topics will be implemented by professionally licensed staff via coaching sessions and periodized training plans to develop the technical, physical, social and tactical components of the game. Those training sessions will be engineered to incrementally grow players through the stages of development (initial, basic, intermediate and advanced) and will imple-

Coach's Spotlight



Coach Scott Norberg

A former competitive youth soccer player from NYC, Coach Scott holds VYSA licenses, the USSF National "C" license, the NSCAA National Diploma and is a Coerver© trained Youth Coach.

Coach Scott has over twelve years of coaching experience and worked with Holy Child Soccer (NYC) and Great Falls Soccer Club (VA), for various Boys Travel Teams (U9-U15). Coach Scott also works with Paul IV High School as an Assistant Coach & Opposition Scout for the Boys Varsity team. Coach Scott is in his second year with AUFC as the Head Coach of the AUFC 2004G Extreme, and FCV Premier Super-Y teams. He was appointed the Girls Director of Coaching in January 2017.



Training Stages by Age Groups

Late Specialization Model	Age	Objective
FUNDamental Stage	Females 6-8 Males 6-9	Learn fundamental movement skills
Learning to Train Stage	Females 8-11 Males 9-12	Learn fundamental soccer skills
Training to Train Stage	Females 11-15 Males 12-16	Build the aerobic base and build strength toward the end of the phase and further develop soccer-specific skills
Training to Compete Stage	Females 15-17 Males 16-18	Optimize fitness preparation and sport, individual and position specific skills as well as performance
Training to Win Stage	Females 17+ Males 18+	Maximize fitness preparation and sport, individual and position specific skills as well as performance
Retention Stage	Competitive Retirement	Retain players for coaching, officials, administration, etc.

ment a player centric coaching model that recognizes the developmental needs of each player as an individual vice just the team.

Specifically the PDM will focus on 3 core areas, **Club, Coach and Player**; recognizing the critical role all 3 components play in developing a player to the highest level.

- ◆ Players must be focused on learning the critical skills of their trade. Recognizing that developing their technical, psychology, fitness and tactical acumen is the primary objective of every player.
- ◆ Coaching factors including the professional standards (licensing), curriculum, planning and periodization of training as defining factors that influences a players growth.
- ◆ The Club's vision, organization, history and partnerships provides the foundation, identity and logistics/resources players need to train and compete.

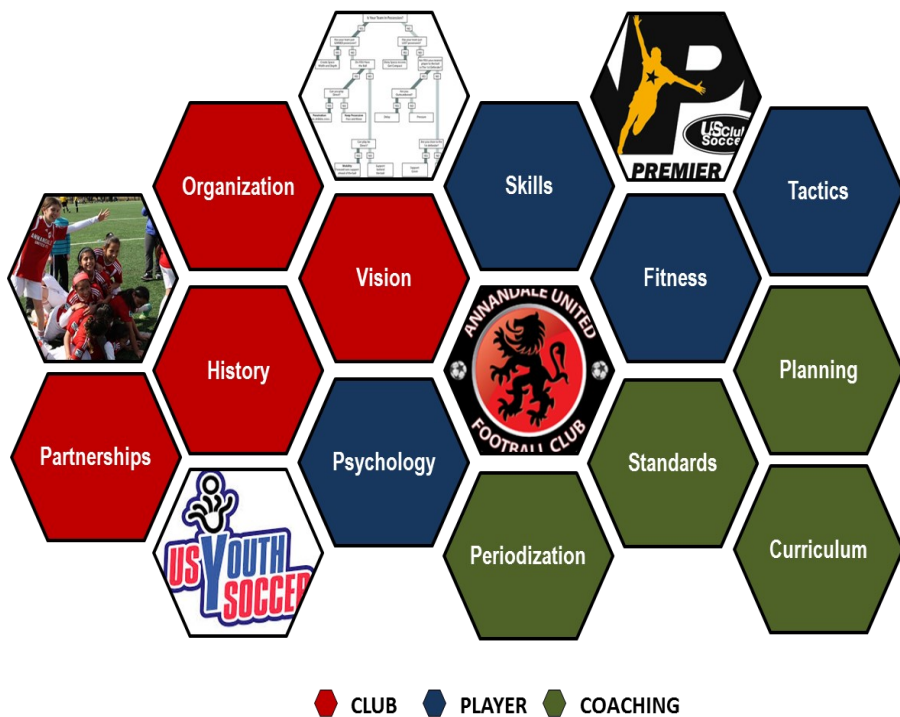


Figure A: AUFC Player Development Model (PDM)

Player Pathway

Too often Clubs are more concerned with “locking-in” their players to a competitive team because of the impact that player may have on the team if they graduate to a higher level of play. AUFC discounts this notion as a relic of a failed youth development system that prioritized wins and glory for the Club vice the needs of the players we are commissioned to grow. Why should a player who is legitimately capable of playing in the USSF Development Academy (DA) or a regional ECNL team be held back from playing at a higher level?

With to our strategic partnership with FC Virginia (FCV), our player pathway affords players the chance to participate in some of the finest competitive environments available across the nation including the; National Premier League (NPL), Eastern Regional League (ERL), SUPER-Y, Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) and ultimately the US Soccer Development Academy (DA).

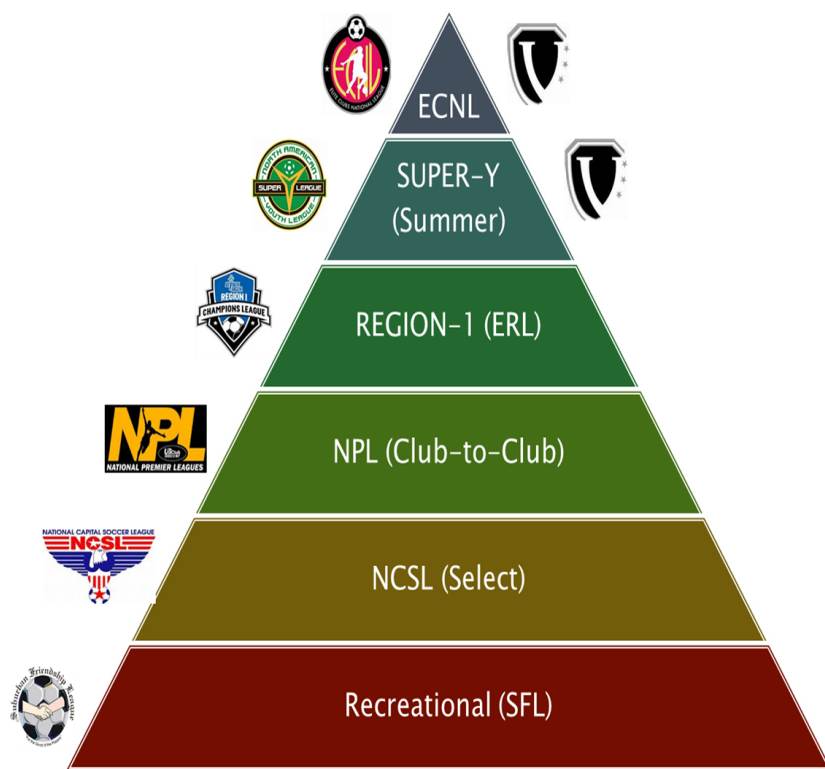


Figure B: AUFC Player Pathway

Part of AUFC's core mission is focused on providing every capable player an opportunity to play the game in HS, College or beyond. AUFC, unlike many other NOVA Clubs, is not focused on expanding our brand and reputation, but **giving you the ability to grow yours!**

Annandale United FC Spring Expansion & Summer Super-Y Tryouts

Annandale United FC is holding spring expansion & summer Super-Y tryouts for hard working girls that have the passion and desire to play competitive soccer. AUFC is expanding to multiple teams per age group and will form teams or add players at the NCSL (Select) and NPL (Premier) levels of soccer play as needed. Additionally we will form Super-Y teams which will compete this summer for a National Championship!

Please email aufc_girls@annandaleunitedfc.org to register your interest!

Girls:

2008s U9
2007s U10
2006s U11
2005s U12
2004s U13
2003s U14
2002s U15
2001s U16



Annandale HS Stadium
4700 Medford Drive, Annandale, VA

Saturday's - Jan 14, 21, 28,
Feb 4, 11, 18, 25, March 4th

U9-U12 : 10-11AM

U13-U16 : 11-12PM



Please bring shin pads, soccer boots & wear white tops



Spring 2017 AUFC Kicks for Cans!

The Charitable Soccer Scrimmage Festival to Fight Local Hunger!



The Annandale United FC girls' soccer program is proud to host our FREE 5th edition of the Kicks for Cans Charity Soccer Scrimmage Festival this March. We will host several local Clubs in a round robin of mini matches for a variety of age groups as well as an 11 v 11 scrimmage with older teams to cap off the day. Date/time & locations in March will be determined based on permit availability.

Each player from the participating teams, family members, and supporters will donate non-perishable food items to benefit the ACCA Food Pantry right here in Annandale. In Fall 2015, we donated over 2000 pounds of food to support the fight against local hunger. The AUFC Girl's Soccer Program has a tradition of year-round charitable efforts to fight hunger; we are proud to continue this effort!



PLEASE COME & SUPPORT THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER WHILE WATCHING GREAT GIRLS SOCCER!

Cognovation Dialogues: *Coaching vs Teaching*

Dr. Darren McKnight, Cognitive Development Advisor (“Think about Thinking”)

So, do you want your child’s coach to be coaching or teaching or both? Some say that teaching is one-way and coaching is two-way; THAT IS WRONG! Good teaching is always two-way. Some say that teaching is about the teacher and coaching is about the athlete: THAT IS WRONG! There are many student-focused teachers and many coach-focused coaches.

In reality, you want someone who can do both... well!

I propose that coaching and teaching both have four functions; these four functions must be performed well by either a good coach or a good teacher. These four activities are motivating the student/athlete, demonstrating skills, evaluating performance, and teaching responsibility. Of note, the first and last are the ones most often shortchanged by typical coaches and teachers.

MOTIVATE:

Having a positive passion for soccer opens up your child to this beautiful sport and exposes them to a behavior that is beneficial to all aspects of their life.

“Positive” means you find good naturally in a situation before you see the bad.

The classic “sandwich” method is one technique consistent with espousing a positive attitude: “sandwich” a coaching critique between two compliments: “*Grace, you are being really aggressive on defense! Hey, if you drop your outside foot when they are making a run at you, it will help force them to the outside toward the side-line and out of scoring position. Keep up the good work out there!*”

A good coach does not only motivate a player short term to perform but inspires them long term to enjoy the learning, building process that can be applied to other endeavors and not just the immediate results.

DEMONSTRATE:

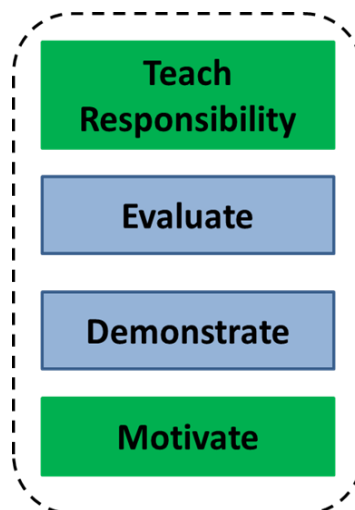
Of course, a coach is responsible for demonstrating proper soccer technique for foot strike, dribbling, headers, etc. However for tactics (*such as throw-in options, corner kick plays, changing the field, etc.*) that requires multiple players, the coach’s job becomes one more of a director. While as a coach, it may seem obvious that you can only demonstrate these activities on the field as a team, actually there are ways to prepare your team for success off the field. I have used handouts to lay the foundation for all of these multi-player activities before demonstrating them on the field. I used weekly homework handouts up through middle school to help them “think through” tactics before “running through” them on the pitch. This is a technique that I also used often when teaching. (I was a physics professor at the US Air Force Academy.)

The figure to the right shows how the amount of information retained depends on the mode of instruction. However, it also highlights the way in which information can be incrementally introduced through the sequence of activities to have the information retained optimally: say it to them, let them read it, then demonstrate it, followed by focused practice and then culminate in a scrimmage.

You will also find while some youth players learn perfectly well by starting with a physical demonstration, others really need to get the information in multiple modes of instruction for them to “get it.”

EVALUATE:

The most important aspect of evaluation is the least well-known: **praise effort, not innate skill!** It has been shown that recognizing



Type of Instruction	Amount of Information Retained
Lecture – coach tells player about skill	5%
Read – player reads about skill for him/herself	10%
Demonstration – coach shows player a skill	30%
Practice – player does skill	75%
Applied in Game Situation – player immediately uses, especially when teaching others	90%

Figure A: Retention of Instruction by Mode

someone for something that they are not responsible for actually demotivates them. So, do not praise a player's speed, praise their hard work; do not praise their strong leg, praise their field awareness (*which comes from thinking*). Clearly, if you have a player who has been going to speed training to increase their foot speed, then reinforcing their positive work ethic by praising their new speed that THEY WORKED FOR is different!

Everyone pays attention to things that are easy to measure such as goals, wins, losses, etc. Do not dwell on these – everyone else will do it for you. Determine what behavior and interactions that will lead to individual and team performance with which they have control: effort on the field, preparation off the field, select the best option for team performance (versus a player's own statistics), etc. Since it is activities that they can control (*unlike height, speed, etc.*), this will set the precedence for self-evaluation which leads to the last core competency of a good coach: teaching responsibility.

TEACH RESPONSIBILITY:

Both teachers and coaches could benefit significantly from letting the student/athlete be more responsible for outcomes.

There were ways that I tried to “*give my players room to grow*” and let them become responsible for their own success. First, I would select one major soccer skill at the beginning of a season for them to strive to enhance. Second, I would communicate each skill to each player and their parents. I told them that we would review progress on this at the end of the season. For many it was the same skill but for others it was very different. For example, for my U9 Girls team it was often

“*better field awareness – of opponent and own team*” while for another player it might be “*win more one-on-one matchups in the middle third.*” At the end of the season, usually during a practice where I had the assistant running the practice, I would call the players over one by one and ask two specific questions before I did anything: “*So, what is the skill that you are responsible for improving this season?*” If they did not remember, that told me something right there. After reminding them of the skill (if needed), the next question was “*How do you think you are doing with [that skill]?*” I have found that when queried calmly and supportively, players will be much more critical of themselves than you would be. This gives you the chance to reinforce their progress rather than their failures plus it reinforces that they have the responsibility to put the effort in. As a coach, I just provide the positive environment of quality teaching.

By being an overly directive coach during the game you are taking away their opportunity for solving the problem on their own.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

You could have replaced the game of soccer with the subject of English or piano lessons all throughout this essay. The point is that a good coach helps soccer to fit in with your child's learning of life lessons rather than competing for your family's time. A good soccer coach makes soccer about maturing your child into a responsible young positive adult capable of mastering almost any new activity and not necessarily just developing the lineup for next decade's U.S. Olympic team!



Dr. Darren McKnight is currently Technical Director for Integrity Applications, Inc. (IAI) based in Chantilly, Virginia. He leads teams to develop creative solutions across widely disparate domains. Dr. McKnight has authored five books including “Soccer is a Thinking Game!” and over 100 technical papers which he has presented in 15 countries. He has appeared on tens of TV, radio, and newspaper interviews including with Discovery Channel, BBC, CBC and Space News.

Coaches Corner: *Playing the 4-3-3*

Overview

The 4-3-3 formation is designed to both gain control of the central midfield and provide #9's forward in attack. The formation works best when a team is going forward and attempting to win a match, rather than simply trying to contain the opposition. The 4-3-3 is an ideal system to learn because of its tactical flexibility and ability to create triangles all over the pitch. Minor adjustments in positioning and mentality easily allow the system to become a more defensive 4-5-1, or a more balanced 4-4-2.

Strengths

The two main strengths are the control in midfield and the wingers playing high up the pitch.

The midfield trio allows them to control games and in many cases outnumber the opposition's midfield. Most teams in modern football will have at least 1 midfielder whose primary role is to help the defenders to prevent the opposition scoring (#6). One of the ways in which they can do that is by covering the backs as they push forward, filling the spaces between the central defenders and midfielders and even performing a man-marking job on the opposition's number 10.

The front 3 have great responsibility for creating and scoring goals. In order for them to be successful they need to work in tandem to create spaces for one another with their movements in relation to one another. For example, when the left winger crosses the ball, the right winger should arrive at the back post at the correct time whilst the striker should know where the cross is likely to arrive. The two wingers can stay high up the pitch, even when the opposition is attacking which means they can be effective on the counter-attack and it also prevents the opposition's outside-backs pushing too far forward thus limiting the opposition's attacking options.

General Weaknesses

One weakness that could be exploited in this formation is in wide areas. The two wingers will often be pushed fairly high up in the pitch; which may lead to the two outside-backs becoming isolated against the opposition's attackers. This will bring one of the two central midfielders out of position in order to help prevent dangerous attacks in the wide areas, which then means the team loses its shape in the central areas and teams must shift to the side the attack is coming from, which implies the opposite side of the pitch is open.

Another issue with this formation is due to the importance of the outside-backs pushing forward, it leaves only the two center-backs and a defensive midfielder to cover the defense. Therefore, this means that the formation is very attack minded and in games where the opposition is dominant in possession it will be hard for the team to gain control of the game.

Conclusion

This formation would be suitable for a team who is looking to play an attacking brand of football with the wingers pushed high, the outside-backs overlapping and the two midfielders looking to contribute to attack. It would be very risky for a coach to use this formation in a game where the opposition is the favored team due to the risks of counter-attacking play in moments of transition.





League Key

NCSL - The regional National Capital Soccer League

NPL - US Club Soccer's National Premier League program

ERL - Eastern Regional League brings the best Region 1 teams together for elite tournament play.

SUPER-Y - A competitive, USL led, national summer league

ECNL - US Club Soccer's Elite Club National League program

AUFC & FC Virginia Partnership

In 2014 Annandale United FC and FC Virginia announced a strategic partnership to deliver the best in class player development program to Northern Virginia. Leveraging each Club's rich history and experience in developing Championship teams and College Athletes, the Clubs joined forces to specifically to strengthen the Boys program and provide a player pathway to the highest levels of play with the newly announced ECNL Boys program.

Starting January 2017, AUFC & FCV will extend that partnership to the Club's respective Girls Program and provide the following benefits to both Club's players:

- Continued partnership in the USL Summer Super-Y Program.
- ECNL/DA Player Identification Clinics run in the Annandale Area.
- Club & team integration pathways driven by DOC player evaluations.
- Coaching Education program & Club standards initiative.
- Shared player development curriculum.
- Greater field sharing between Clubs to shorten commute times for training.
- Pre-season training camps, and scrimmages to provide year long training.
- Integrated Eastern Regional League (ERL) and elite showcase tournament teams.



SEE YOU ALL ON THE PITCH!!!



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